

REMARKS

Claims 1-53 are pending with claims 1, 26, 48, 49, 50, 51, and 53 being independent.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 7, 10, 12, 32, 35, 37, and 52 recite allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-31, 33, 34, 36, 38-51, and 53 have been rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,298,449 (Carter) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,714,977 (Fowler). This rejection is discussed below with respect to each grouping of claims.

Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, and 13-25:

Independent claim 1 relates to an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with a power system. The device includes a processor and memory storing software instructions performed by the processor for receiving electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link and for automatically transmitting electronic mail to the remote system through the communication link. The device includes a power system interface circuit for communicating with the power system. The processor is coupled to the power system interface circuit.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 because neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests an intelligent electronic device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link.

Carter relates to a highly reliable personal computer platform. See Carter at col. 1, lines 6-43. The platform includes a personal computer 12 connected to a data network (or LAN) 18 and to a public switch telephone network (PSTN) 20. See Carter at col. 3, lines 53-57 and Fig. 1. The computer 12 includes a reliability card 10 that monitors the computer 12 for "events associated with operational failure of the host computer." See Carter at col. 4, lines 15-19 and Fig. 2. If the card 10 indicates a serious event, the computer 12 transmits an alarm message across the LAN 18 to a remote computer 34. See Carter at col. 4, lines 1-5 and 42-48. Alternatively, the reliability card 10 can transmit an alarm message to a remote computer 36

through the PSTN 20. See Carter at col. 6, lines 23-40 and Fig. 2. The reliability card 10 can receive a reboot command from the remote computer 34 through the LAN 18 or from a remote device such as a telephone 62 through the PSTN 20. See Carter at col. 6, line 41 to col. 7, lines 11. However, the card 10 used in Carter's platform never receives electronic mail from either the remote computer 34, the remote computer 36, or the telephone 62. Carter also never mentions that electronic mail is transmitted to either the remote computer 34, the remote computer 36, or the telephone 62.

Apparently realizing these deficiencies of Carter, the Examiner cites Fowler. However, Fowler fails to cure the deficiencies of Carter to describe or suggest a device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. Fowler relates to a system for monitoring a network and the physical environment housing the network. See Fowler at col. 5, lines 60-64 and Figs. 1 and 2. The system includes a climate bot 28 that connects through a standard Ethernet connection to a bridge router 26. See Fowler at col. 6, lines 27-31 and Fig. 2. The bridge router 26 connects to a company web server 30, to an internal client 34 on the company intranet, or to an external client 22 through the Internet. See Fowler at col. 6, lines 33-36 and Fig. 2. The climate bot 30 monitors the server room's environment and reports the status of the parameters of that environment through a web page, electronic mail, or paging. See Fowler at col. 7, lines 10-15. However, while Fowler's bot 30 transmits electronic mail to the internal client 34 or to the external client 22, Fowler's bot 30 never receives electronic mail from either the internal client 34 or the external client 22. For this reason, Fowler fails to describe or suggest a device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link.

Thus, any proper combination of Carter and Fowler would still fail to describe or suggest a device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over Carter in view of Fowler.

Claims 2-6, 8, 9, 11, and 13-25 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable and for containing allowable subject matter in their own right. For example, claim 9 recites that the memory stores software instructions performed by the

processor for receiving within the electronic mail a request for information relating to operation of one or more of the power system and the device. As discussed above, neither Carter nor Fowler describes or suggests a device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. Thus, neither Carter nor Fowler describes or suggests receiving within the electronic mail a request for information.

The Examiner points to col. 2, lines 35-41 and 49-53 of Carter as somehow showing receiving within the electronic mail a request for information relating to operation of one or more of a power system and an intelligent electronic device. The Examiner explains that "application software can process SNMP messages [that] contain information regarding operating status of power supplies." However, this passage merely describes how the software determines that a notification should be transmitted when an event occurs, explaining that "the transmitted message is in the form of a simple network management protocol (SNMP) message" and the "preferred form of notification depends on the urgency associated with the particular abnormality which has been detected." There is no suggestion in this passage (1) that the card 10 receives electronic mail and (2) that a request for information is within an electronic mail.

As another example, claim 25 recites that the memory stores instructions performed by the processor for receiving instant messages from a remote system through a communication link and for automatically transmitting instant messages to the remote system through the communication link. Neither Carter nor Fowler describes or suggests a processor that receives instant messages from a remote system through a communication link through which instant messages are also transmitted.

The Examiner points to col. 2, lines 60-63 of Carter as somehow showing receipt of instant messages from a remote system through a communication link through which instant messages are also automatically transmitted. However, this passage of Carter merely describes that an alarm output (labeled 48 in Fig. 3) and a service modem (labeled 50 in Fig. 3) are activated by application software (labeled 24 in Fig. 2) of the host computer (labeled 12 in Fig. 1) "upon reading specific event data from a register on the add-on card." There is no suggestion in this passage that instant messages are received or transmitted.

The Examiner further explains that the "register stores data regarding specific events that can be sent via messaging." Applicant notes that the above-cited passage is silent on messaging. Nevertheless, the next passage of Carter does explain that the application software 24 (of the host computer 12) "can be configured to selectively enable any combination of the notification capabilities, including ... the computer monitor message display, the SNMP messaging, and the relay contact alarm output, ..." See Carter at col. 2, line 63 to col. 3, line 1. However, this passage is deficient in two regards. First, the passage never mentions "instant messages." Rather, the passage only describes SNMP messaging and alarm outputs. Second, this passage never mentions that messages are received from a "remote system." Rather, the messages are transmitted to either a local system, that is, the computer monitor 14 of the host computer 12, or through SNMP to the remote computer 34.

Claims 26-31, 33, 34, 36, and 38-47:

Independent claim 26 relates to an apparatus for interacting with a power system. The apparatus includes an intelligent electronic device connected to the power system and a system remote from the intelligent electronic device and connected to the intelligent electronic device through a communication link. The intelligent electronic device includes a processor and memory storing software instructions performed by the processor for receiving electronic mail from the remote system through the communication link and for transmitting electronic mail to the remote system through the communication link. The intelligent electronic device also includes a power system interface circuit in communication with the power system.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 26 because, as discussed above with respect to claim 1, neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests an intelligent electronic device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. For this reason, claim 26 is allowable over any proper combination of Carter and Fowler.

Claims 27-31, 33, 34, 36, and 38-47 depend from claim 26 and are allowable for at least the reasons that claim 26 is allowable and for containing allowable subject matter in their own

right. For example, as discussed above, neither Carter nor Fowler describes or suggests receiving within the electronic mail a request for information, as recited in claims 27 and 34.

Claim 48:

Independent claim 48 relates to an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with a power system. The device includes a processor and memory storing software instructions performed by the processor for receiving an instant message from a remote system through a communication link and for automatically transmitting an instant message to the remote system through the communication link. The device also includes a power system interface circuit for communicating with the power system. The processor is coupled to the power system interface circuit.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 48 because, as discussed above with respect to claim 25, neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests an intelligent electronic device having a processor that receives an instant message from a remote system through a communication link.

The Examiner never addresses whether Carter or Fowler teach receipt of an instant message from a remote system. The Examiner merely states in making the rejection of claim 48 [emphasis added]:

Carter teaches of a system that communicates with a power source via an SNMP message and stores them in error logs. Carter does not teach of communicating messages via email. Fowler discloses a system wherein an electronic mail message can be converted into a SNMP message. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the references of Carter with the message conversion of Fowler ... because Carter discloses the need for a direct controller to LAN system connection. (Lines 16-21 of Column 3). Fowler would provide a direct connection between [sic] power supplies and LAN systems via email. (Lines 5-9 of the abstract).

First, claim 48 does not recite receiving electronic mail. Thus, it is unclear why the Examiner refers to electronic mail. Second, Carter's system does not communicate with a power source through an SNMP message. Rather Carter's reliability card 10 transmits a message in the form

of SNMP to a remote computer 34 through the LAN 18. See Carter at col. 2, lines 41-47 and Fig. 2. Third, because claim 48 does not recite receiving electronic mail, it is irrelevant whether Fowler's system converts electronic mail into any format. Fourth, while Carter describes that access to a reboot controller of the reliability card 12, there is no suggestion that Carter requires that the reliability card 12 receive an instant message. Fifth, whether Fowler provides a "direct connection" is irrelevant because claim 48 recites receiving an "instant message," not a "direct connection."

Moreover, the Examiner has not pointed to any portions of Carter or Fowler that describe a processor that receives an instant message from a remote system, where the processor resides on an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with a power system. For this reason, the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, which requires that the prior art references (when combined) teach or suggest all of the claim limitations.

Claim 49:

Independent claim 49 relates to an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with a power system. The device includes a processor and memory storing software instructions performed by the processor for receiving electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. The device also includes a power system interface circuit for communicating with the power system. The processor is coupled to the power system interface circuit.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 49 because, as discussed above with respect to claim 1, neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests an intelligent electronic device having a processor that receives electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. For this reason, claim 49 is allowable over any proper combination of Carter and Fowler.

Claim 50:

Independent claim 50 relates to an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with a power system. The device includes a processor and memory storing software instructions performed by the processor for automatically transmitting electronic mail to a remote system through a communication link. The device also includes a power system interface circuit for communicating with power system components that are used for the distribution or dissemination of electric power in the power system. The processor is coupled to the power system interface circuit.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 50 because neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests a power system interface circuit for communicating with power system components that are used for the distribution or dissemination of electric power in the power system and that includes a processor that automatically transmits electronic mail to a remote system through a communication link.

Carter's reliability card 10 is not connected to communicate with components of the power supply (not shown in Fig. 3 of Carter). Rather, Carter's reliability card 10 merely monitors line voltage to the computer 12, line current consumption by the computer 12, and output voltage of the power supply. See Carter at col. 4, lines 27-31; col. 4, line 62 to col. 5, line 1; col. 5, lines 8-43; and Fig. 3. Moreover, Fowler fails to cure the deficiencies of Carter. Fowler's system does not communicate with any components of the power supply. Rather, Fowler's system merely monitors the environmental conditions within the network housing. See Fowler at abstract.

Thus, any proper combination of Carter and Fowler would still fail to describe or suggest a power system interface circuit for communicating with power system components that are used for the distribution or dissemination of electric power in the power system and that includes a processor that automatically transmits electronic mail to a remote system through a communication link. For this reason, claim 50 is allowable over any proper combination of Carter and Fowler.

Claim 51:

Independent claim 51 relates to a computer readable medium having embodied thereon a computer program for processing by an intelligent electronic device. The computer program includes a first code segment to receive input from a power system relating to operation of the power system, a second code segment to send output to the power system to operate a fault protection device when input received from the power system indicates a fault event in the power system, and a third code segment to receive electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 51 because, as discussed above with respect to claim 1, neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests an intelligent electronic device that processes a computer program having a code segment to receive electronic mail from a remote system through a communication link. For this reason, claim 51 is allowable over any proper combination of Carter and Fowler.

Claim 53:

Independent claim 53 relates to a computer readable medium having embodied thereon a computer program for processing by an intelligent electronic device connected to interact with components of a power system. The computer program includes a first code segment to receive input from power system components used for the distribution or dissemination of electric power in the power system. The input relates to operation of the power system. The computer program includes a second code segment to send output to the power system to operate a fault protection device when input received from the power system indicates a fault event in the power system, and a third code segment to automatically transmit electronic mail to a remote system through a communication link.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 53 because, as discussed above with respect to claim 50, neither Carter, Fowler, nor any proper combination of the two describes or suggests communication with power system components that are used for the distribution or dissemination of electric power in the power system and automatic transmittal of electronic mail

Applicant : Peter Michael Wright et al.
Serial No. : 09/835,398
Filed : April 17, 2001
Page : 20 of 20

Attorney's Docket No.: 08215-415001 / P03-026035

to a remote system through a communication link. For this reason, claim 53 is allowable over any proper combination of Carter and Fowler.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 22, 2004

Diana DiBerardino
Diana DiBerardino
Reg. No. 45,653

Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331